

**CHARLIE BAKER**  
Governor



**KARYN POLITO**  
Lt. Governor

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**CONTACT**

William Pitman

[william.pitman@state.ma.us](mailto:william.pitman@state.ma.us)



## **Governor Baker Signs Animal Safety and Protection Legislation**

**BOSTON** – Today, Governor Charlie Baker ceremoniously signed *An Act preventing animal suffering and death* ([S. 2369](#)), which prohibits the confinement of animals to vehicles where they are subject to danger from extreme weather conditions, limits the length animals can be tethered outdoors, and enables first responders and bystanders to assist in their rescue.

“While we hope and expect no one should ever have to act to save a pet or child from such dangerous conditions, we understand those situations unfortunately do arise and lives can depend on a quick response,” **said Governor Charlie Baker.** “I am pleased this legislation gives first responders and bystanders the tools to take reasonable actions to rescue pets in imminent danger.”

The legislation allows animal control officers, police or firefighters to enter vehicles to rescue an animal and allows citizens to act similarly in rescuing an animal in imminent danger after first calling 911. All first responders will be given immunity from civil or criminal liability and violators will be subject to fines for such conduct.

“This legislation helps ensure the well-being of the pets that many of us consider companions and family, strengthening state laws that prevent the mistreatment of animals in the Commonwealth,” **said Lt. Governor Karyn Polito.**

“Too many animals have suffered from neglect, whether in a dangerously hot car or chained outside for interminable lengths of time, this bill is an important step in

ensuring that in addition to our empathy they have the weight of our laws to defend them,” **said Senator Mark Montigny (D – New Bedford) Assistant Majority Leader and Chair of the Senate Committee on Rules, the Senate sponsor of the bill.** “This legislation will ensure that reckless and abusive owners face stiff penalties and empower local authorities and the general public to contribute to the wellbeing of our four-legged friends.”

"Most of us treat our pets like family members -- some even better. However, for the poor animals that are neglectfully left in hot cars or tethered inappropriately, this new law is for them," **said Lori Ehrlich (D – Marblehead) the House sponsor of the bill,** "For the safety of those who cannot save themselves, I'm proud to have proposed and helped pass this bill."

The legislation reduces the number of hours each day during which a dog can be tethered outside from 24 hours to 5 hours, limits tethering to 15 supervised minutes during the hours of 10:00 PM to 6:00 AM, and prohibits any outdoor tethering during severe weather. The bill increases the fines for second offense tethering violations from \$100 to \$200 and \$300 to \$500 for subsequent offenses.

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